

# **Trends in Fertility, Family Planning, and Child Mortality in the Philippines**

**Results from the 1993  
National Demographic Survey**



**National Statistics Office**



**Demographic  
and Health  
Surveys**

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**Results from the 1993  
National Demographic Survey**

National Statistics Office  
Manila, Philippines

Macro International Inc.  
Calverton, Maryland USA

February 1995

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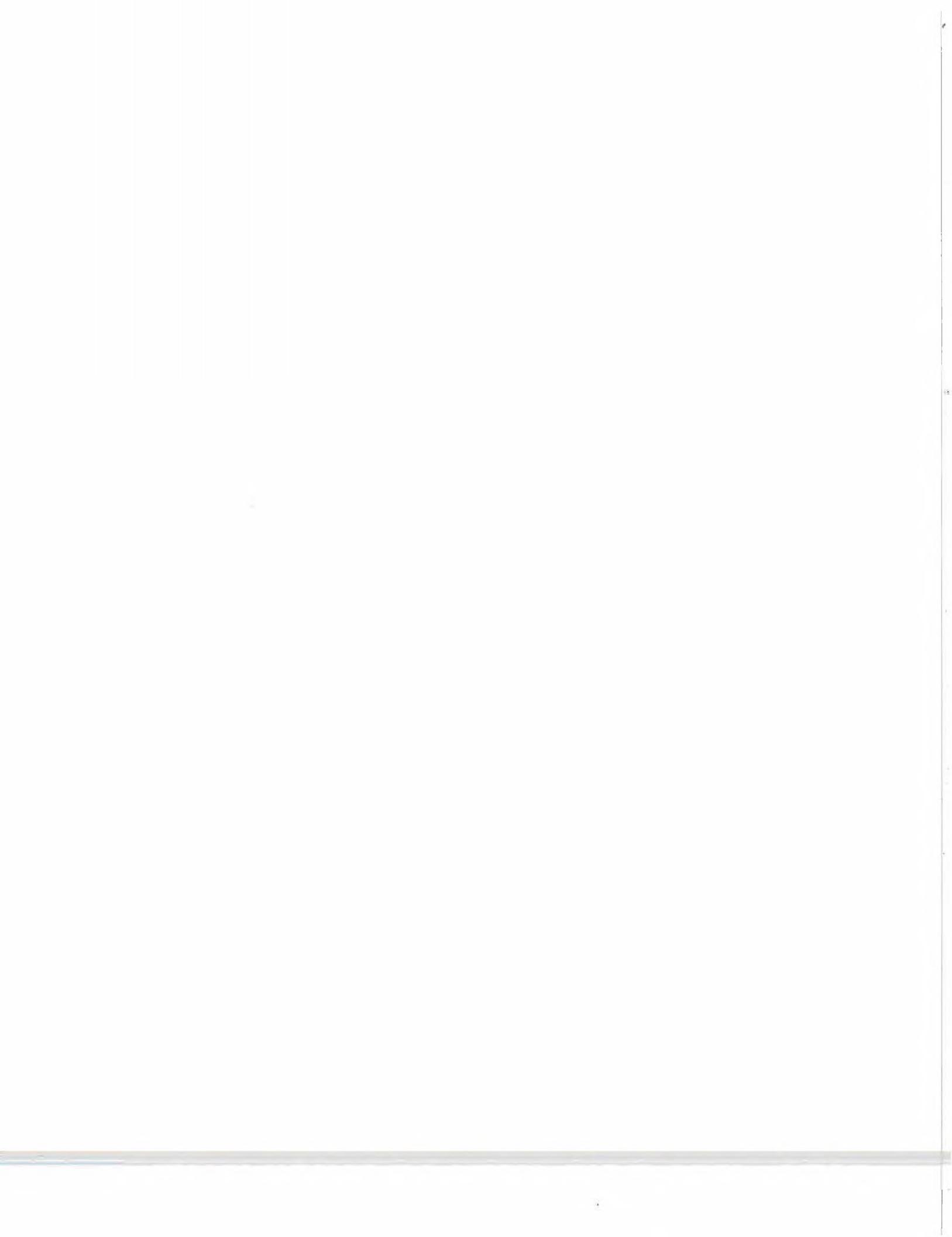
This report was prepared as part of the worldwide Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) program, which is designed to collect data on fertility, family planning and maternal and child health. Funding for DHS surveys is provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development. Additional information about the 1993 National Demographic Survey (NDS) may be obtained from the National Statistics Office, Solicarel Building I, Ramon Magsaysay Boulevard, Manila (Telephone: 632-716-02-98, 632-716-04-04 and 632-622-818; Fax: 632-610-794 and 632-716-02-47). Additional information about the DHS program may be obtained by writing to: DHS, Macro International Inc., 11785 Beltsville Drive, Calverton, MD 20705, USA (Telephone: 301-572-0200; Fax: 301-572-0999).

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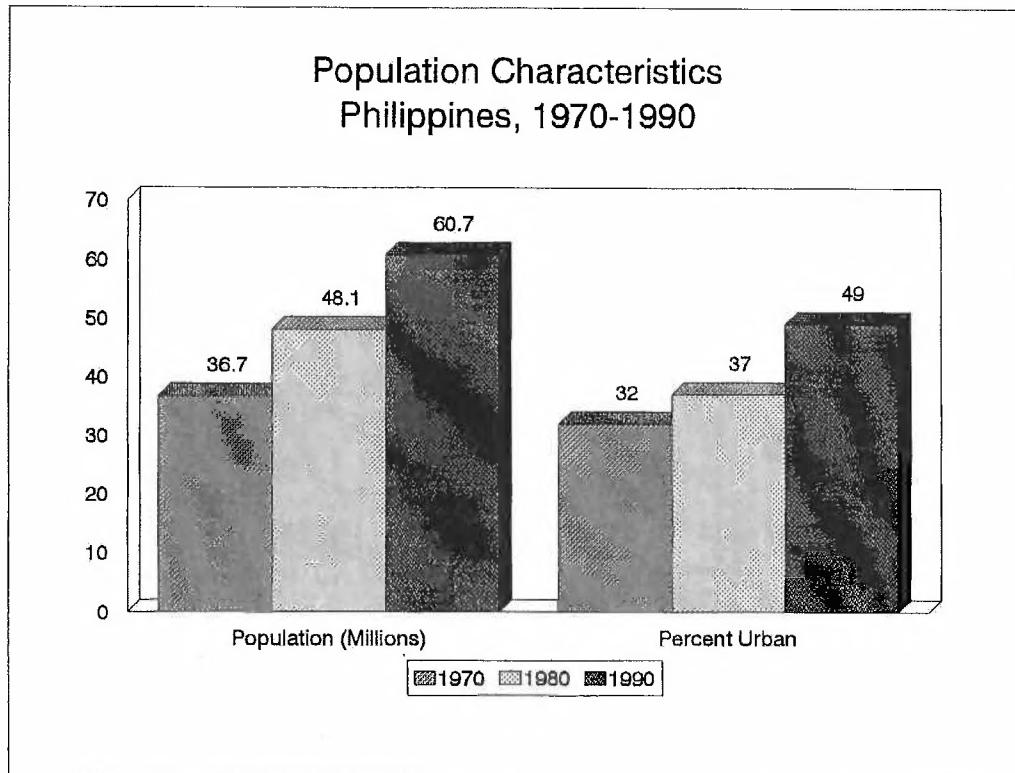
# Introduction

This report highlights important trends in key population and health indicators in the Philippines over a period of two decades. The Republic of the Philippines has a long history of demographic data collection, beginning in 1960 with the decennial population and housing census program. Intercensal demographic surveys have been conducted every five years since 1968, and there have been several interim surveys. This report draws information from the Censuses of Population and Housing of 1970, 1980 and 1990, and from the intercensal demographic surveys, particularly, the 1978 Republic of the Philippines Fertility Survey (RPFS), the 1986 Contraceptive Prevalence Survey (CPS), and the 1993 National Demographic Survey (NDS). The availability of data from these surveys provides an excellent opportunity for investigating trends in fertility, family planning knowledge and use, and infant and child mortality. However, since different organizations conducted these surveys, and different procedures were used in reporting the results, direct comparison of the published results is difficult. Therefore, this trend analysis is necessarily limited in scope.

Differences among the surveys are found primarily in the survey questionnaires and the methodology used to calculate estimates. Except for the 1993 NDS, which included all women 15-49, survey respondents were ever-married women of childbearing age. All of the surveys included pregnancy histories for women 15-49, allowing the direct estimation of fertility and childhood mortality rates. All of the surveys included questions on knowledge and use of family planning.

The 1978 RPFS was conducted by the National Statistics Office (NSO); the 1986 CPS was carried out by the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI); and the 1993 NDS was conducted by the NSO in collaboration with the Department of Health, the UPPI, and other government agencies.

# Population Characteristics

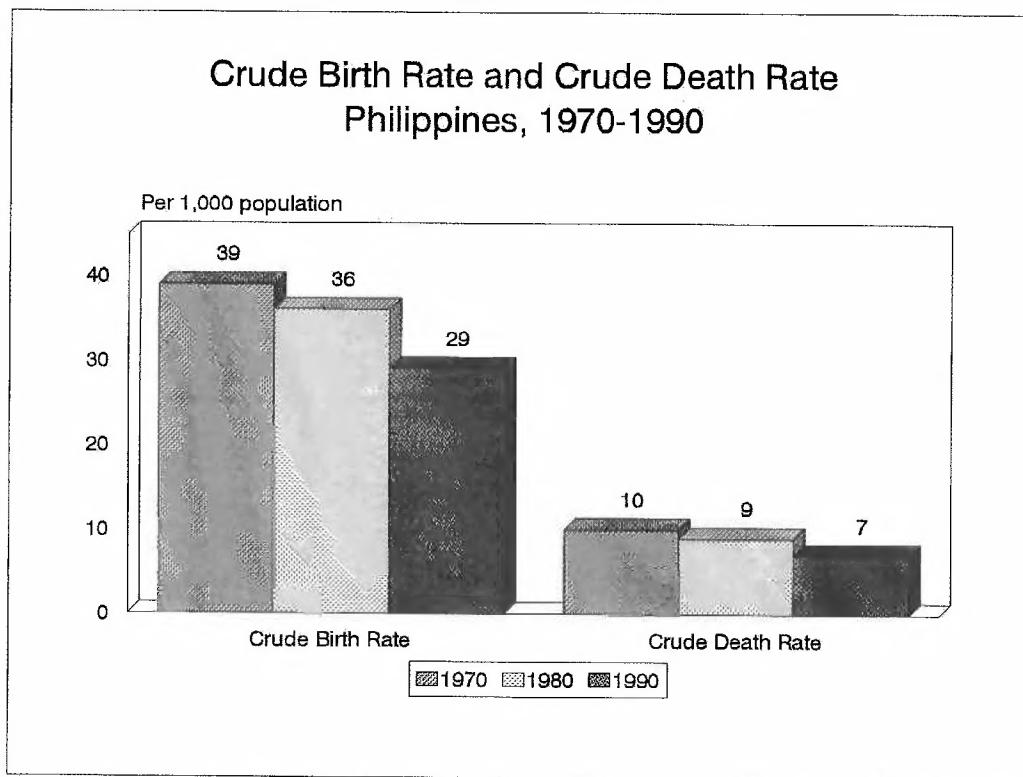


- The Philippines, with an estimated 60.7 million people in 1990, is the fourteenth most populous country in the world. It is the third largest in Southeast Asia after Indonesia (189 million) and Vietnam (71 million).<sup>1</sup>
- More than 12 million people were added to the Philippines population between 1980 and 1990, resulting in an average annual growth rate of 2.4 percent. If growth continues at this pace, the population will double in 30 years.
- The proportion of the population living in urban areas has increased significantly in the past two decades from 32 percent in 1970 to 37 percent in 1980, and to 49 percent in 1990.

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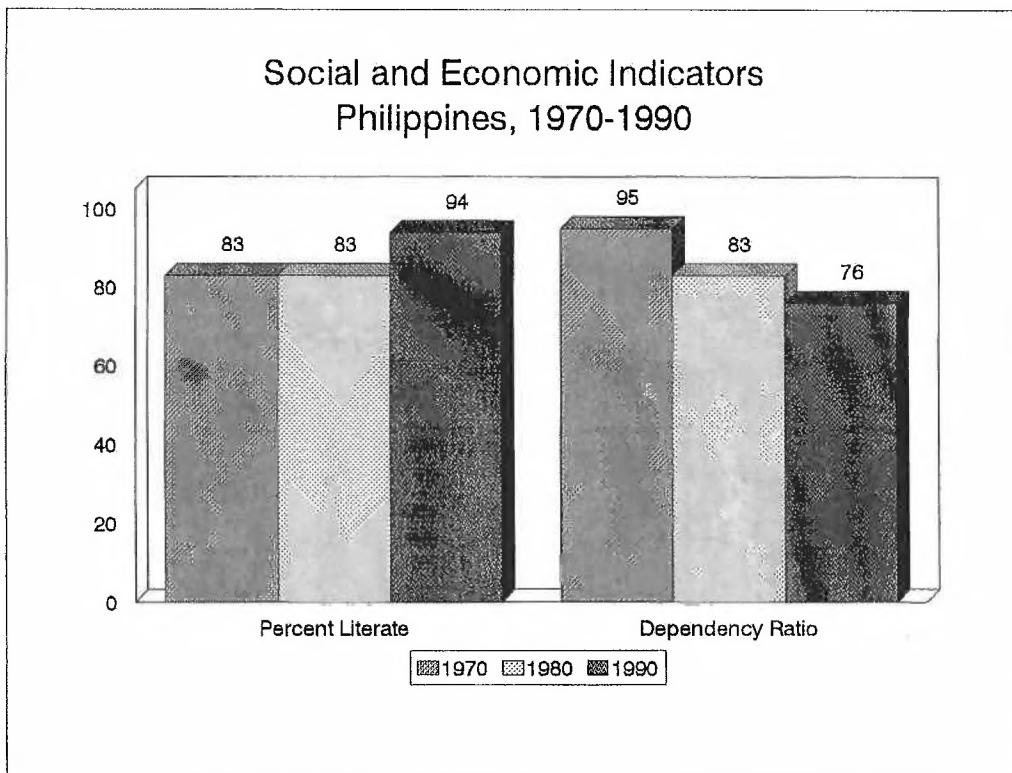
<sup>1</sup> 1993 ESCAP Population Data Sheet

## Crude Birth Rate and Crude Death Rate



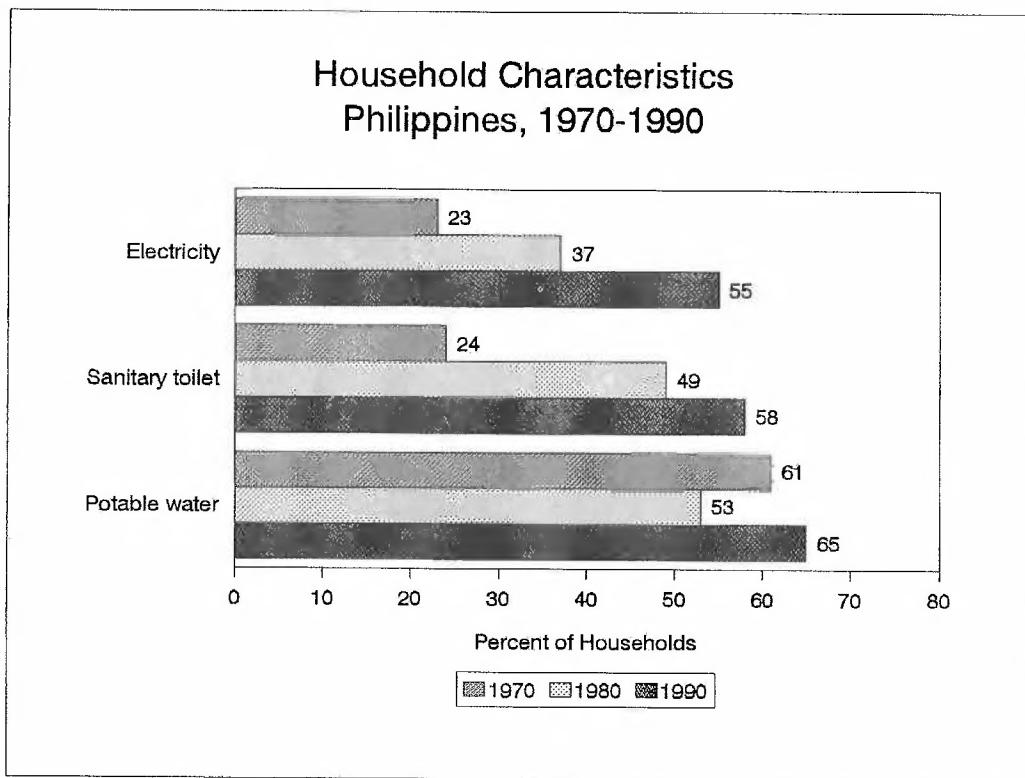
- The crude birth rate in the Philippines was estimated at 29 per 1,000 population in 1990. This is a decline of 26 percent from 39 per 1,000 population twenty years ago.
- Similarly, the crude death rate declined from 10 per 1,000 population in 1970 to 7 per 1,000 population in 1990.
- Life expectancy at birth has increased steadily for both sexes. For males, it increased from 54 years in 1970 to 62 years in 1990. Females experienced an even larger increase in life expectancy, from 57 years in 1970 to 67 years in 1990 (data not shown).

## Social and Economic Indicators



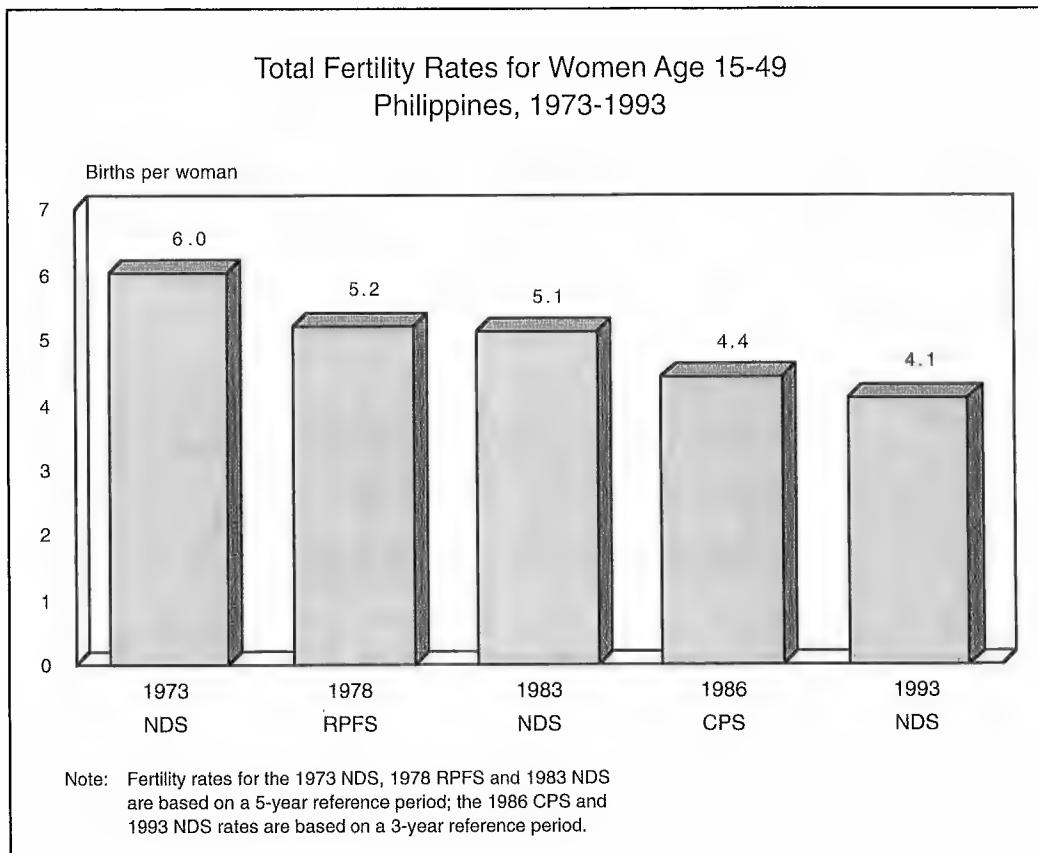
- The Philippines population is predominantly literate. In 1970, 83 percent of the population 10 years and over could read and write. This proportion increased to 94 percent in 1990.
- As a result of fertility decline, the proportion of children under 15 years of age decreased from 46 percent in 1970 to 40 percent in 1990. At the same time, the proportion of people 15-64 increased, so that the dependency ratio—the number of persons 0-14 years and 65 years and over per 100 persons in the productive age group (15-64 years)—declined substantially, from 95 in 1970 to 76 in 1990.
- Household size decreased over the same period. While in 1970 a household consisted, on average, of almost 6 persons, twenty years later the average household size had fallen to 5.3 persons (data not shown).

## Household Characteristics



- Electricity has become more available to Filipino households. While fewer than one in four households had electricity in 1970, by 1990, more than half of all households in the Philippines had electricity.
- There have been significant improvements with regard to sanitation. The percentage of households with a sanitary toilet facility increased from 24 percent in 1970 to 58 percent in 1993.
- Access to safe drinking water is important to public health. In 1990, almost two-thirds of households had potable water, up from three-fifths in 1970.
- Radios, television sets, and refrigerators have become increasingly common in Filipino households. In 1970, only 6 percent of households owned a television or a refrigerator; in 1993, more than 40 percent owned a television and nearly 30 percent had a refrigerator. Growth in radio ownership has also been steady—increasing from 49 percent in 1970 to 66 percent in 1993 (data not shown).

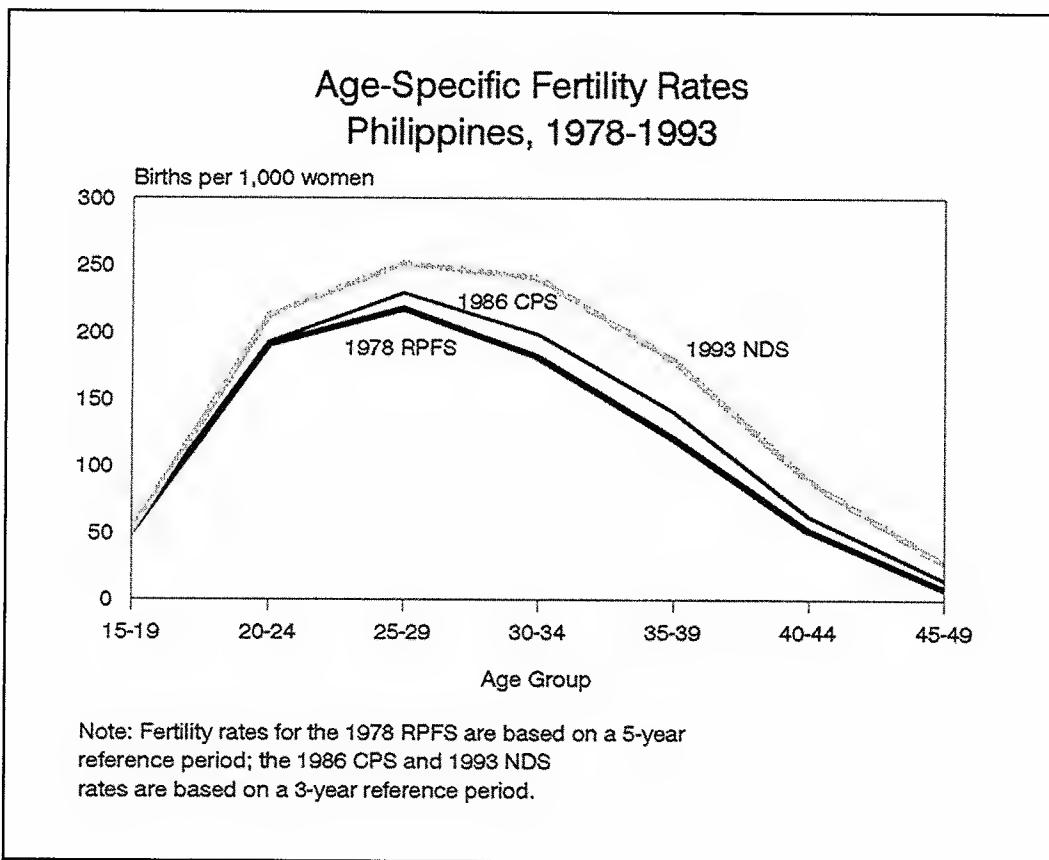
## Total Fertility Rates



- The total fertility rate<sup>2</sup> in the Philippines has been declining steadily for two decades. In 1993, Filipino women had an average of 4.1 births, almost two children less than the average in 1973 (6 births per woman).
- Still, fertility levels are higher and fertility decline has been more gradual in the Philippines than in other countries in Southeast Asia. For example, the total fertility rate in Thailand declined from 5.1 births in 1975 to 2.2 births in 1991. In Indonesia, fertility declined from 5.2 births in 1971-75 to 3.0 births in 1988-91 (data not shown).

<sup>2</sup> The total fertility rate is the number of births women would have, on average, if the current age-specific fertility rates prevailed throughout their reproductive lives.

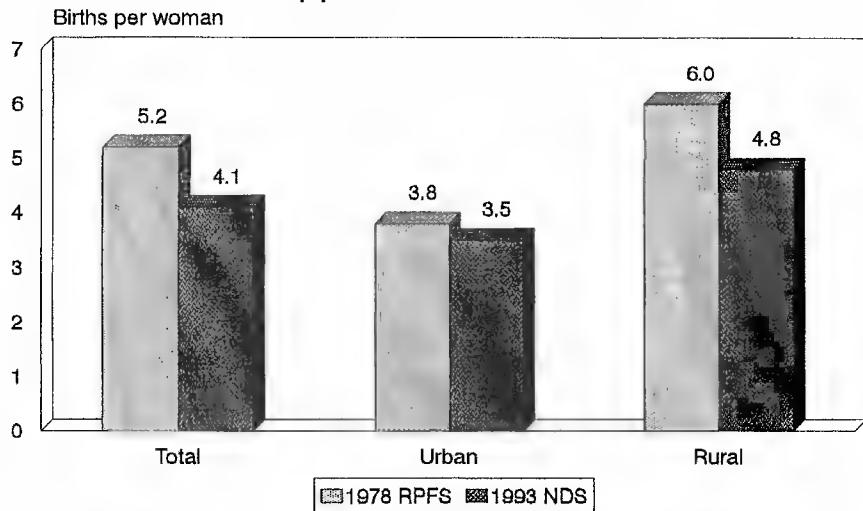
## Age-Specific Fertility Rates



- The decline in fertility has occurred at all ages, with the largest absolute decreases observed among women in the older age cohorts, particularly women 30-34 and 35-39.
- As a result of these changes, women are having a higher proportion of births at younger ages. Currently, a Filipino woman will have given birth to 1.2 children—almost 30 percent of her lifetime births—by age 25 and to 2.3 children—more than half of her lifetime births—by age 30.

## Fertility by Urban-Rural Residence

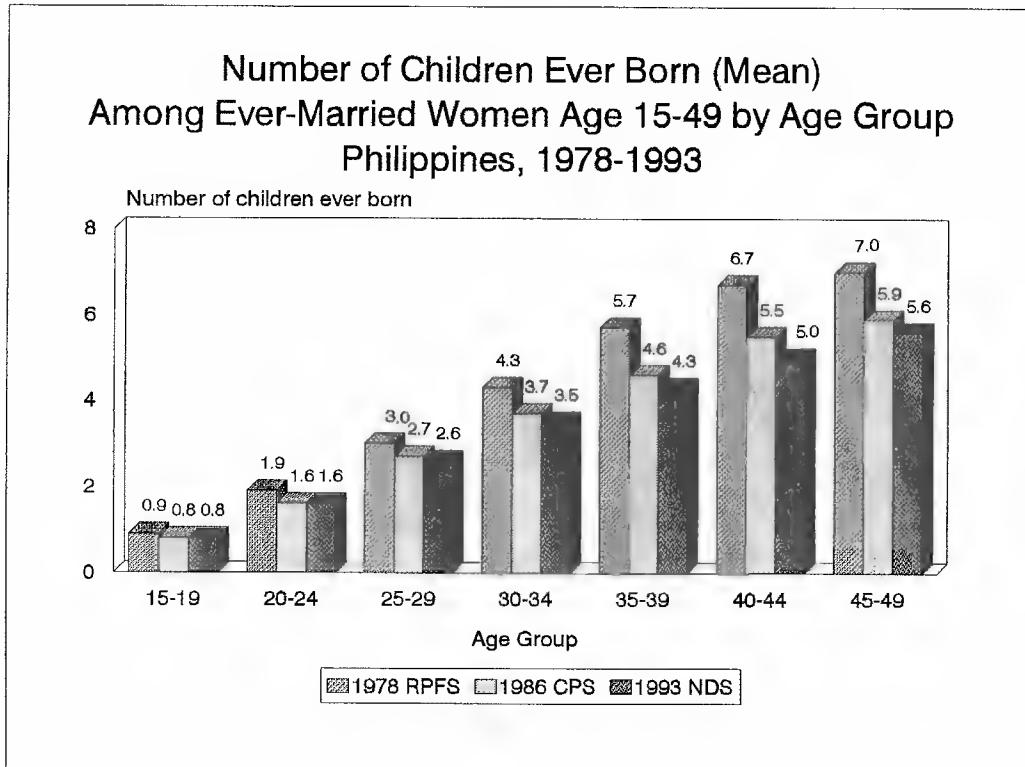
Total Fertility Rates for Women Age 15-49  
by Urban-Rural Residence  
Philippines, 1978 and 1993



Note: Fertility rates for the 1978 RPFS are based on a 5-year reference period;  
the 1993 NDS rates are based on a 3-year reference period.

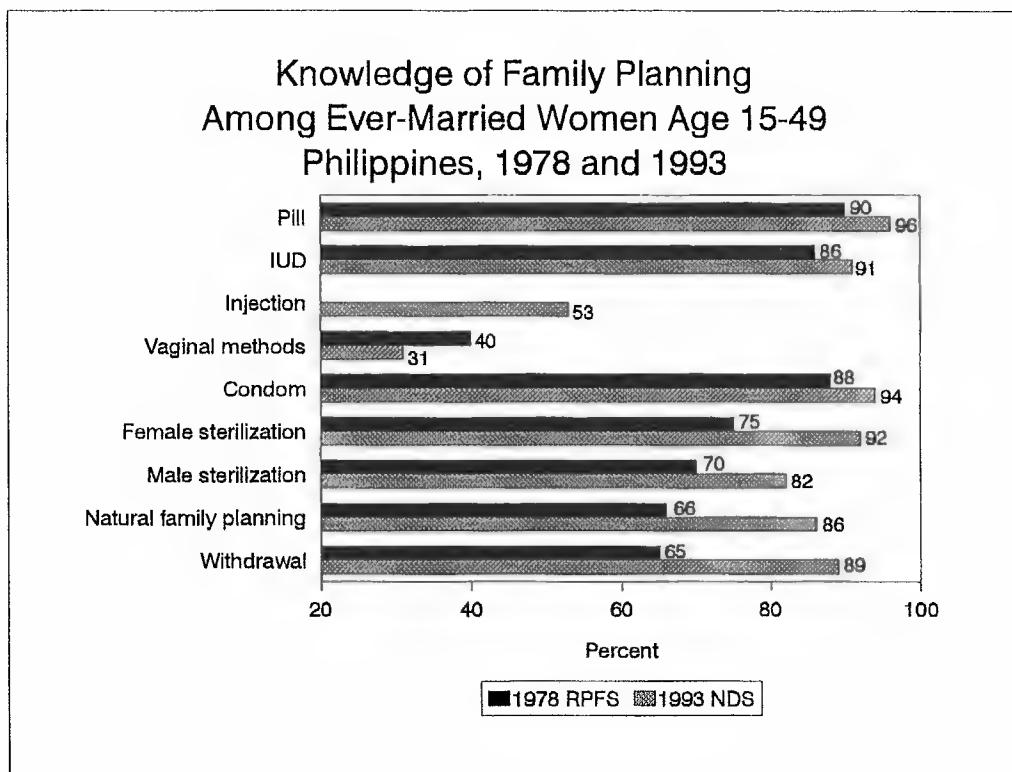
- Urban women have fewer children than rural women. In 1993, the total fertility rate for urban areas was 3.5, 1.3 births less than in rural areas.
- Over the past 15 years, fertility has declined more than twice as fast in rural areas (20 percent) as in urban areas (8 percent). As a result, the gap in fertility between urban and rural women has narrowed substantially—from 2.2 children in 1978 to 1.3 children in 1993.

## Number of Children Ever Born



- The number of children ever born is a measure of completed fertility. Between 1978 and 1993, the average number of children ever born to ever-married women declined by one child, from 4.6 children per woman in 1978 to 3.6 children in 1993 (data not shown).
- The decline in completed fertility is found in all age groups; however, the largest absolute decline is seen among older women, particularly those age 35 and older.

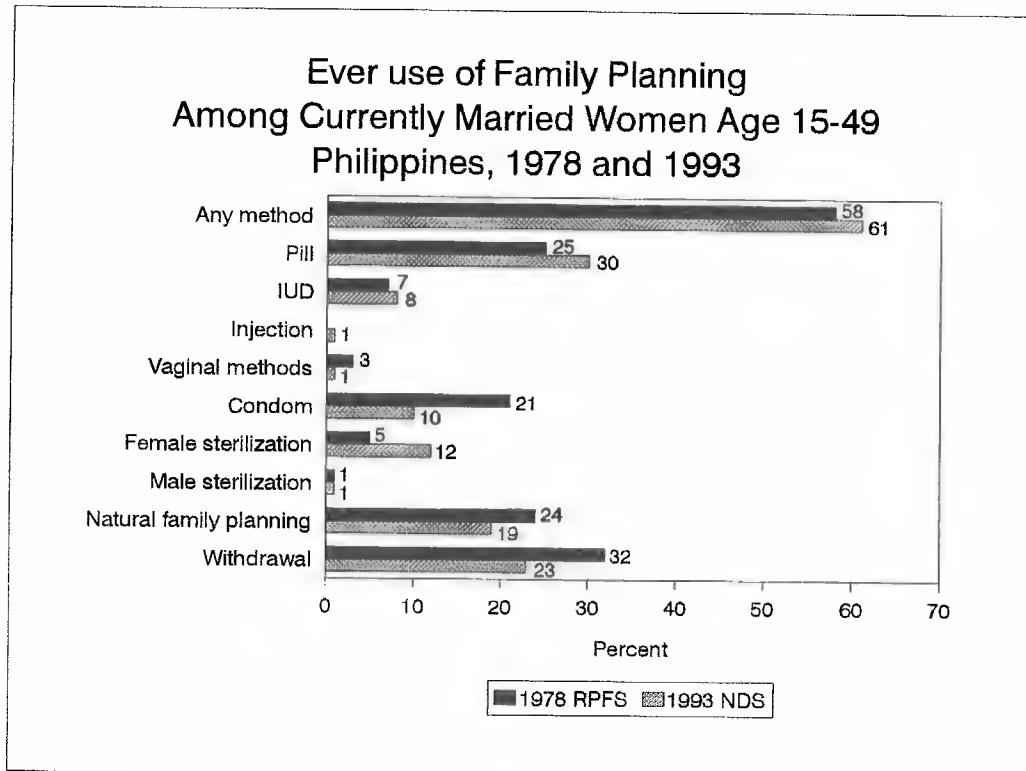
## Knowledge of Family Planning



- Information on contraceptive knowledge and use is of particular interest to policymakers, program managers, and researchers in population and family planning. Familiarity with contraceptive methods<sup>3</sup> is prerequisite to the adoption of fertility regulation.
- In the Philippines, knowledge of at least one contraceptive method has been virtually universal for the past 25 years. Modern methods are somewhat more likely to be known than traditional methods. Among modern methods, the pill is the most widely known, followed by the condom, IUD, and female sterilization.
- Knowledge of traditional methods, in particular, natural family planning and withdrawal, has increased significantly in recent years. In 1993, almost 90 percent of ever-married women had heard of natural family planning and withdrawal.

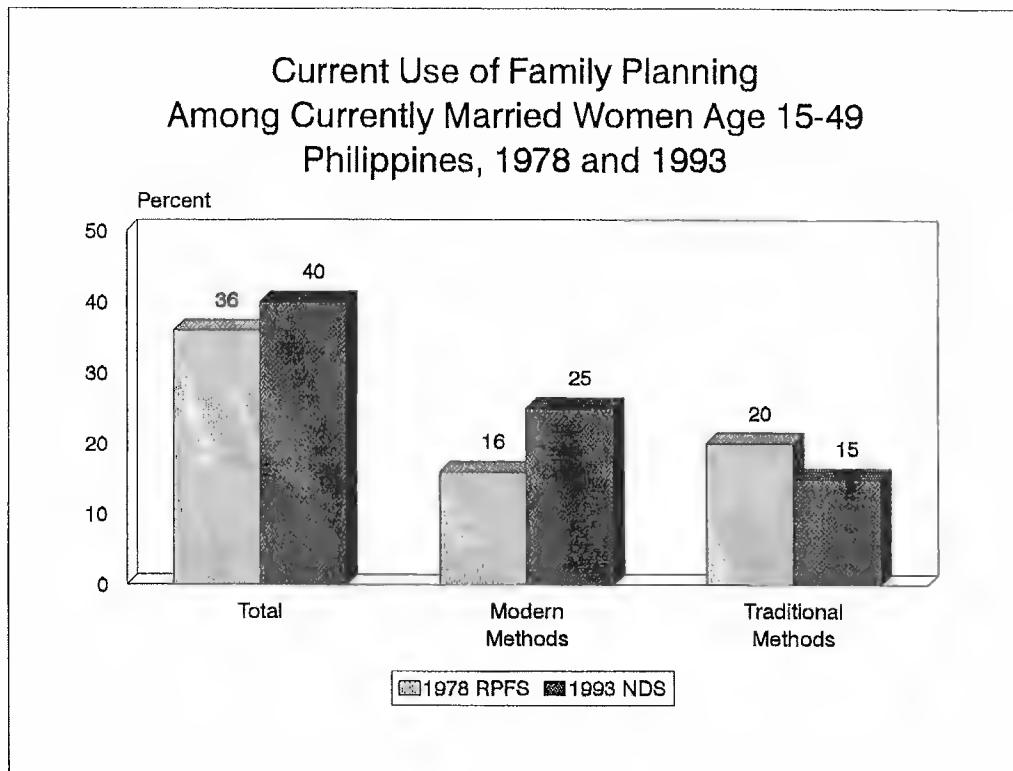
<sup>3</sup> Modern contraceptives include the pill, IUD, condom, injection, female sterilization, male sterilization, and vaginal methods. Traditional methods include natural family planning (periodic abstinence), withdrawal, and other methods.

## Ever Use of Family Planning



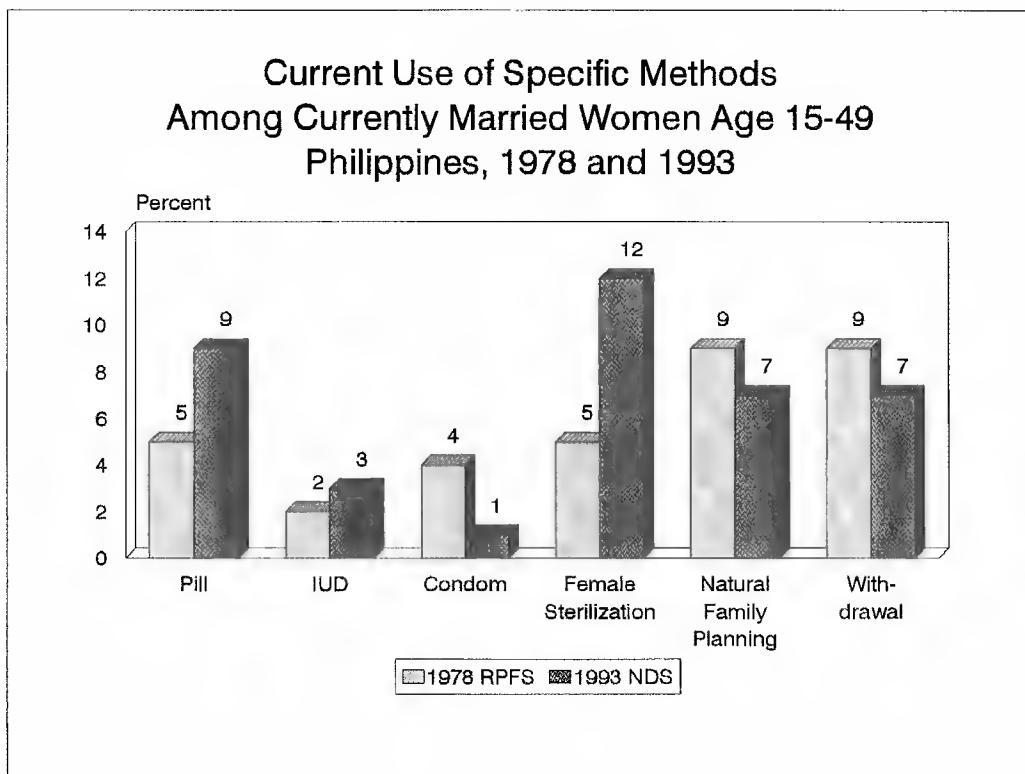
- The proportion of women who have at least some experience with family planning has increased only slightly in the past 15 years. In 1993, 61 percent of married women reported having used a family planning method at some time in their lives, just 3 percentage points more than the proportion who had ever used a method in 1978 (58 percent).
- In 1993, Filipino women were more likely to have used a modern method than a traditional method. Between 1978 and 1993 there was a significant increase in the proportion of women reporting ever use of the pill and female sterilization.
- Ever use of some modern methods such as the condom and vaginal methods has declined, as has ever use of traditional methods such as natural family planning (periodic abstinence) and withdrawal.

## Current Use of Family Planning



- Between 1978 and 1993, contraceptive use among currently married women increased 11 percent, from 36 to 40 percent.
- During this period, there was a dramatic change in the pattern of contraceptive use, with use of modern methods outweighing that of traditional methods. In 1978, more than half of women who adopted family planning were using traditional methods. In 1993, 63 percent were using modern methods.
- Although the proportion of married women using contraception has increased, it is still relatively low compared with neighboring countries in Southeast Asia. In 1991, 50 percent of married women in Indonesia and 68 percent in Thailand were using a contraceptive method. Further, more than 90 percent of users in Indonesia and Thailand were using modern methods.

## Current Use of Specific Methods

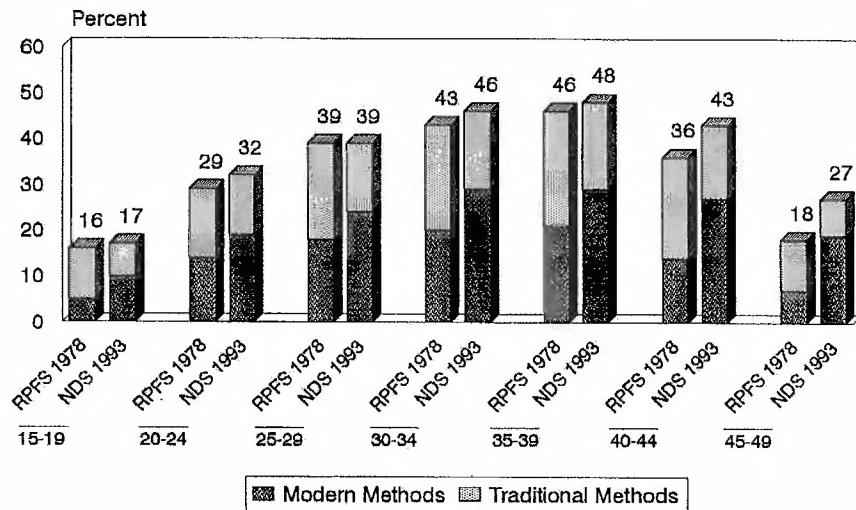


- Since 1978, there has been an increase in current use of all modern methods, with the exception of the condom (and vaginal methods<sup>4</sup>).
- Female sterilization increased substantially, from 5 percent in 1978 to 12 percent in 1993. Nearly half of women using a modern method rely on tubal ligation.
- Pill use almost doubled between 1978 and 1993, increasing from 5 to 9 percent.
- Natural family planning and withdrawal are the most popular traditional methods, each being used by 7 percent of married women. This represents a decline from 9 percent reported in 1978.

<sup>4</sup> Less than 0.1 percent of respondents reported current use of vaginal methods in the 1993 NDS.

## Contraceptive Use by Age

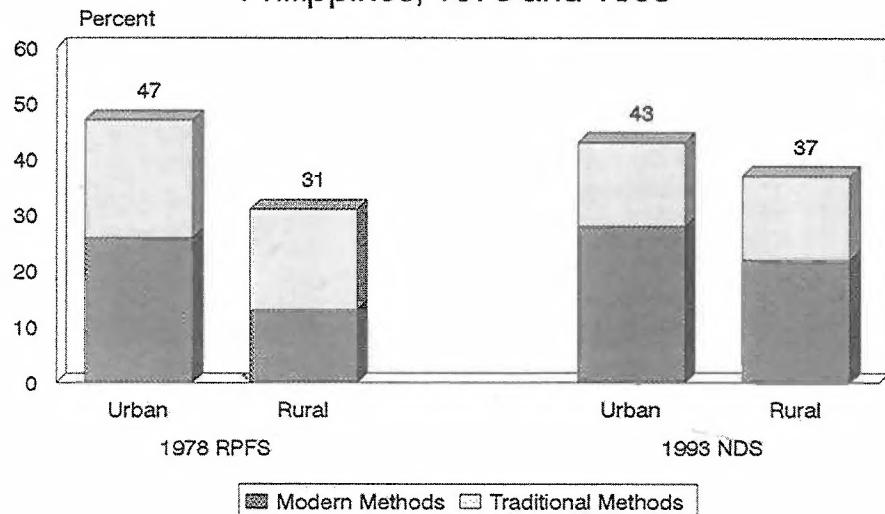
Contraceptive Use Among Currently Married  
Women Age 15-49 by Age Group  
Philippines, 1978 and 1993



- In all age groups, more married women were using modern contraceptive methods in 1993 than in 1978.
- The largest absolute increase in contraceptive use occurred among women age 40 and older.
- Older women are more likely to use long term and permanent methods such as the IUD and female and male sterilization, while younger women tend to use the pill (data not shown).
- Natural family planning and withdrawal are more popular among women over thirty than those under thirty (data not shown).

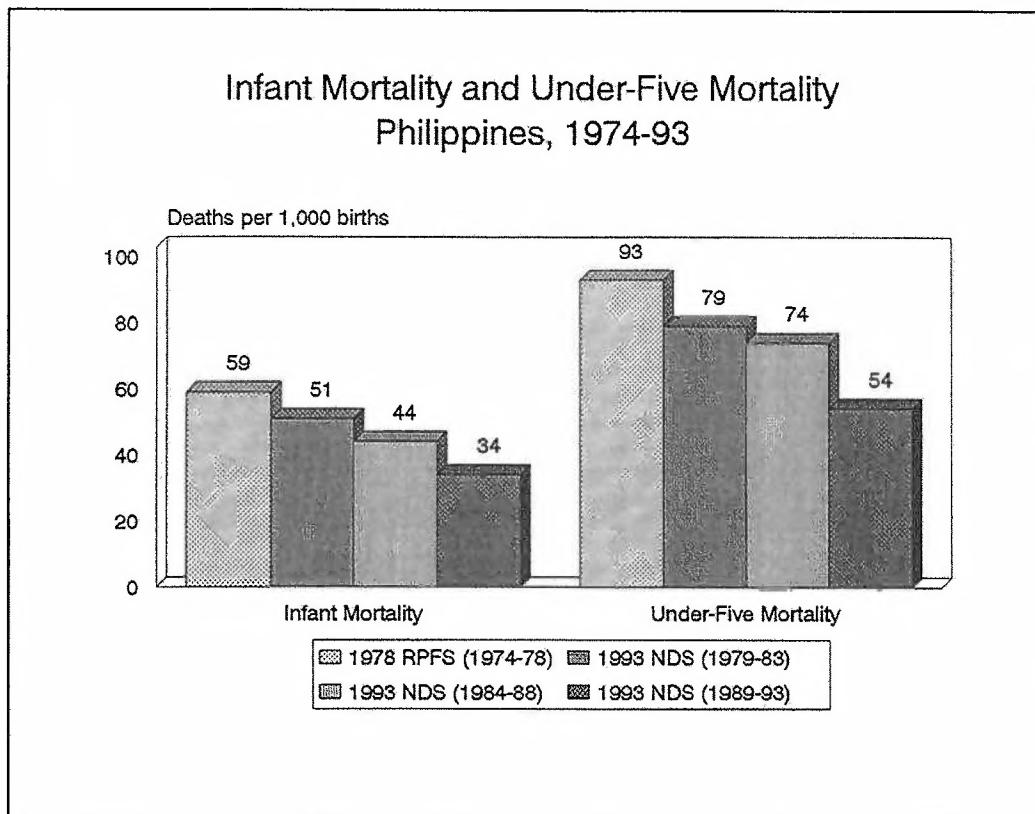
## Contraceptive Use by Urban-Rural Residence

Contraceptive Use Among Currently Married Women Age 15-49 by Urban-Rural Residence Philippines, 1978 and 1993



- Although urban women are still more likely to use contraception than rural women, the gap has been narrowing over the past 15 years. In 1993, the difference was 6 percent, compared with 16 percent in 1978.
- In both urban and rural areas, women were more likely to use traditional methods in 1978, while modern methods were more popular in 1993.

## Infant and Under-Five Mortality



- Infant and under-five mortality in the Philippines have been declining for 15 years. Data from the 1978 RPFS and the 1993 NDS indicate that childhood mortality fell more rapidly in the late 1980s than it did during the 1970s.
- Infant mortality has declined from 59 deaths per 1,000 births in the period 1974-78 to 34 deaths per 1,000 births in the period 1989-93.
- Under-five mortality has declined from 93 deaths per 1,000 births in the period 1974-78 to 54 deaths per 1,000 births in the period 1989-93.

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